CREATING AND MARKETING SENSORY-FRIENDLY CULTURAL EVENTS FOR AUDIENCES & VISITORS WITH AUTISM AND SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDERS

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Why offer “Sensory Friendly” cultural programs?
At least 1 in 20 children’s daily lives is affected by Sensory Processing Disorder*

1 in 6 children experiences sensory symptoms that may be significant enough to affect everyday life*

Autism prevalence figures are growing**

Autism now affects 1 in 68 children, of which 1 in 42 are boys **

Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the U.S.**

Autism affects over 3 million individuals in the U.S. and tens of millions worldwide **

Autism costs a family $60,000 a year on average

* Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation

** Autism Speaks

Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs: LEAD 8.3.2014
Why offer “Sensory Friendly” cultural programs?

Making the Arts Fun for Everyone!

Miami-Dade County's Department of Cultural Affairs is delighted to provide accessible arts experiences through its All Kids Included (AKI) initiative. AKI provides funding, ideas, programs, and resources so that all children—those with disabilities and without—can fully participate in the arts. Here's how:
Creating a Sensory-Friendly Cultural Event for Audiences & Visitors with Autism and Sensory Processing Disorders

Pre-Visit Planning

- Convene Focus Groups
- Establish an Accepting Environment (training)
- Provide a pre-show / pre-visit guide or video
- Prepare a pre-show / pre-visit introduction
Appropriate Modifications and Accommodations

- Consider offering discounted admission
- Consider the size of the crowd / limit attendance
- Allow general admission seating
Appropriate Modifications and Accommodations

- Limit the length of the performance/visit
- Do not include an intermission
- Modify sound and lighting levels
Appropriate Modifications and Accommodations

- Provide noise canceling headsets / earmuffs
- Provide a professionally-staffed “Quiet Room”
- Provide remote viewing for performing arts
Marketing

- Find your audience!
- Promote pre-show / pre-visit guides or video
- Embed hyperlinks to online guides
- Use the Sensory-Friendly access symbol
Marketing

- Embed hyperlink to Sensory-Friendly webpage
- Include an access statement
- Survey your audience, assess and evaluate
QUESTIONS?